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Mahatma Gandhiji's Non-Violent Militancy, Accomplishing India's Freedom

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Mahatma Gandhiji has been honored as the father of Modern India. He led the movement for India's freedom from the British through non-violent militancy.

Non-violent militancy with a vehicle of Sathya Graha constitutes the Gandhian strategy. When all the other nations of the world fought against colonial masters with violence, Gandhiji used non-violent militancy, although in many contexts it was not honored by the British colonial masters who killed thousands of Indians without mercy, as in the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh. Gandhiji's strategy of non-violent militancy was activated in different phases such as making salt from ocean waters for consumption and weaving cotton clothes, called khader. He himself made cotton yarn in a wheel called a chakra and wore them. The first khader shirt I got by exchanging my own khader yarn. The tailor put on the inside collar a few inches of non-khader cloth, as the cloth I got was not enough, making me very upset about it.

He established many centers all over India for training people at large in the simplest way of life and to be healthy and happy.

I had the great fortune to touch him when he came to my primary school in Kottayam, Kerala, while I was a student there in the 6th grade. Since then, the smiling image of Gandhiji was an inspiration and strength with me, even now.

At age 15, when I was studying in the senior most high school grade in Quilon, Kerala. I inspired my cousin Rajamma to weave khader yarn and spread the mission, although I was struggling to find ways and means to take care of me and my mother, by walking at least 5 miles a day to do tutoring. I also took part in the Freedom Movement. On weekends, I used to walk 10 miles back and forth to go to Mayanad, Quilon and be a part of the audience of a national leader CV Kunjuraman. At night I walked through the busy streets of Quilon speaking to myself in an excited manner and raising my right hand about the fight against the British for freedom. Following Gandhiji, I embraced a life of truth. Thus, while I was working as a clerk in a car factory in Alleppey, I had the courage to refuse the owners to sign a document to betray a worker there. Consequently, they fired me. I went to more than 100 offices asking for a job, telling them the truth that I was dismissed from work because I refused to betray a worker. Now I understand that was

the reason I was not trusted by any of the offices and did not get a job.

I got printed my own writing and sold my book myself, eventually to join as a student for pre-university at N.S.S. College, Changanassery.

In 1946, India got Freedom from the British but Hindu-Muslim Riots took place in many parts of India, eventually, India being divided into Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India. With his long walking stick, wearing the loin cloths, Gandhiji with his followers, went to areas of communal riots, such as Navakhali. I can still remember the picture of Gandhiji walking and consoling the people at large.

By that time, I had become a faithful Gandhian. Later, when I travelled in most parts of India to study life, I went to almost each of the Gandhian centers and stayed there a few days as a devotee. I saw and experienced how people there ate very simple food of dal and chapathi and slept on the floor on a simple mat.

I still remember, along with many others how the news of Gandhiji being killed by a fanatic reached us. This was one of the most painful events in my life.

From 1946 to the present, the materialistic industrial culture has developed and has been influencing the people away from spirituality as a whole, including the Gandhian spirit. M.P. Manmadhan founded a weekly, Grama Saaraj, meaning Self-dependent village, following the Gandhian principles. I did some services to the weekly. Consequently, Manmadhan Chettan made some recommendations for me to find a job as editorial assistant to Malayali Newspaper in Trivandrum.

The enlightening life and spirit of Gandhiji has been leading my own life, providing me the joy of living.